

Yes, Nazis Disarming Jews Did Make a Difference

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Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson has just been dinged by the liberal media for the nth time for observing that the number of Jews murdered in the Holocaust "would have been greatly diminished" had the Nazis not been able to disarm them. He added, "There is a reason that these dictatorial people take the guns first."

This contradicts the narrative that gun control is benign and historically progressive and that government is inherently good and the governed are apparently not.

The problem with this view is that firearm registration and prohibition facilitated the Nazi dictatorship and was an essential tool in rendering powerless the Jews and all other "enemies of the state." Denial of this fact is denial of a factor that led to the Holocaust.

In 1931, Germany's Weimar Republic discovered plans for a Nazi takeover in which Jews would be denied food and all persons refusing to surrender their guns within 24 hours would be executed.

The plans were the handiwork of Hitler lieutenant Werner Best, a future top Gestapo official. In reaction, the government authorized the registration of all firearms and the confiscation thereof, if required for “public safety.” The Interior Minister warned that the records must not fall into the hands of any extremist group.

In 1933, the ultimate extremist group, Hitler’s National Socialist German Workers’ Party, seized power and used the records to identify, disarm and attack both political opponents and Jews. Constitutional rights were suspended, and mass searches and seizures ensued for guns and dissident publications. Police revoked gun licenses of all those who were deemed not “politically reliable” to Nazism.

Over the next five years, German society was “cleansed” by the National Socialist regime. Undesirables were placed in camps where labor made them “free,” and normal rights of citizenship were taken from Jews. The Gestapo banned independent gun clubs and arrested their leaders. Gestapo counsel Werner Best issued a directive to the police forbidding issuance of firearm permits to Jews.

In 1938, Hitler signed a new Gun Control Act. Jews were prohibited from the firearms industry. The time had come to launch a decisive blow to the Jewish community in order to render it defenseless so that its “ill-gotten” property could be redistributed as an entitlement to the German “Volk.” German Jews were ordered to surrender all weapons, and the police had the records on all who had registered them.

This all took place in the weeks before the Night of the Broken Glass, or Kristallnacht, in November 1938. That the Jews were disarmed before Kristallnacht is the strongest evidence that the pogrom was planned in advance and that disarming the Jews was intended to minimize resistance.

An incident was needed to justify the attack. That incident would be the shooting of a German diplomat in Paris by a teenage Polish Jew. Hitler directed Propaganda Minister Josef Goebbels to orchestrate the attack, which entailed the ransacking of Jewish homes and businesses, and the torching of synagogues.

The alleged justification: German authorities were merely searching for illegal firearms.

SS chief Heinrich Himmler, meanwhile, decreed 20 years in a concentration camp for possession of a firearm by a Jew. Revolvers and bayonets from the Great War were confiscated from Jewish veterans who had served with distinction. Twenty thousand Jewish men were thrown into concentration camps and had to pay ransoms to get released.

The U.S. media covered the onslaught. And when France fell to Nazi invasion in 1940, the New York Times reported how the French were now deprived of rights like free speech and firearm possession, just like the Germans. Frenchmen who failed to surrender their firearms within 24 hours were subject to the death penalty.

Ben Carson’s words are historically accurate. It cannot be denied that gun control facilitated the disarming of political opponents and Jews in Nazi Germany and helped Hitler accomplish his horrific goals.

As for those who would register and disarm American citizens today, the history of Nazi Germany teaches a lesson that should never be forgotten.

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